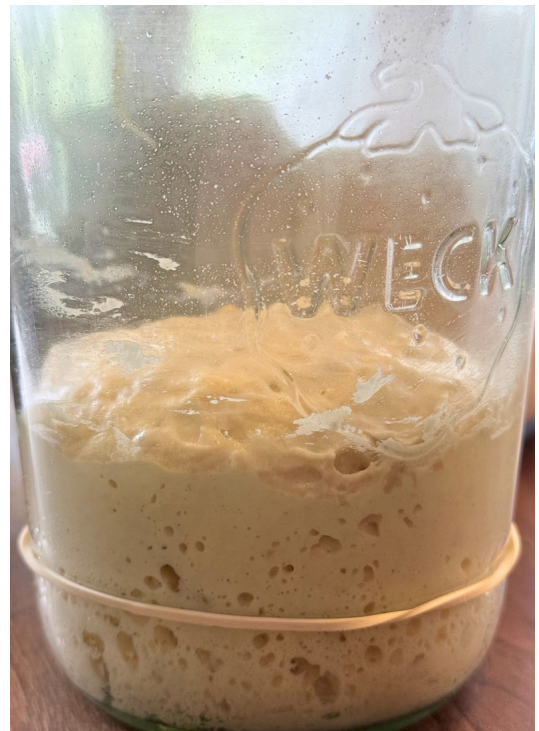


HOW TO MAKE A SOURDOUGH STARTER

THINGS YOU WILL NEED:

- Clean glass jar (a straight-sided jar is best, like a wide mouth mason jar, but any will do)
- Loose-fitting lid for jar (or small towel, cheesecloth or rag and a string or rubber band)
- Flour (unbleached all purpose or bread flour, whole wheat or rye will all work fine)
- Water (bottled, filtered, distilled or purified - no chlorinated tap water)
- Kitchen scale with grams



DAY 1

1. Place your jar on the scale and power on, press 'tare' button to set weight to zero.
2. Set unit of measure to grams.
3. Add 50 grams of whatever flour you are using to the jar (I recommend Unbleached Bread Flour).
4. Press the 'tare' button again to set weight to zero.
5. Add 50 grams of water to the flour.
6. Stir together until flour and water are fully combined.
7. Loosely cover jar with lid or a cloth secured with a string or rubber band.
8. Mark the jar where the top of the mixture is sitting with a marker or rubber band.
9. Place jar in a warm place that is protected from temperature fluctuations (ideally 75-85 degrees Fahrenheit).

The natural fermentation process has now begun. The wild yeast on the grains in your flour and floating in the air will find its way to the perfect little mixture you created for it.

DAY 2

Check your starter for bubblyness and growth. You might see some bubbles and/or some rising.

FEED the starter by repeating steps 1-9 from DAY 1 above (except add only 25g flour and 25g water instead of 50g).

DAY 3

Now that it's been 48 hours, it is far more likely you'll see some real activity happening. You may notice a lot of bubbles and some increased volume. It might even be doubled by now.

BUT not to worry if it still hasn't bulked up. As long as it's bubbling and puffing up you're on the right track. Check the air temperature. If it's too cold (below 70 degrees Fahrenheit) try moving the jar to the oven with the light on or maybe a microwave. You could also wrap the jar in a thick towel or place it inside an oven mitt. Just try to get it warmed up a little. Or if it is above 85 degrees Fahrenheit, try moving the jar to a cooler area like inside a lower cabinet. You can also try using a small fan blowing directly on the jar to help cool the air around it.

Now let's give our starter its first proper feeding.

STEP 1: Scoop out half of the starter and discard it.

STEP 2: Repeat steps 1-9 from DAY 1.

DAY 4

Your starter should be doubling by now. BUT if it hasn't, you should try using some whole wheat or rye flour instead of bread flour when feeding to try to increase the yeast activity. Try heating up your water a little too (105-115 Fahrenheit).

Follow STEP 1 and STEP 2 from DAY 3 above.

DAY 5

If your starter has been an over-achiever from the beginning, it is possible for this to be go-time. Yes, 5 days is enough time to use your starter for baking. If it has been doubling for the last 2 days and has a pleasant, bread-like odor, it should be perfectly fine to get started on a fresh batch of bread dough.

However, I would recommend giving it another day or two to really let it develop.

If it has only just started gaining some real activity and hasn't really doubled yet, just keep pressing on.

Follow STEP 1 and STEP 2 from DAY 3 above.

DAYS 6-?

Remember that word I used earlier? Patience? Yep, this is what I was talking about. This is where I need you to keep persevering. Keep repeating the steps and micro-adjusting along the way. Try different water, different flour, a different jar, lid or room in the house. BUT, wait 24 hours before making another adjustment. Let one play out before introducing another.

Once your starter has fully doubled, however long that may take, continue the feeding cycle for at least 2 days to ensure a healthy culture has been developed.

Now that you have a healthy sourdough starter, you can keep it on the counter and repeat the daily feeding cycle if you're planning to bake frequently.

OR you can store it in the fridge and just give it a feeding once a week or so. Just take it out of the fridge a day or two before using it and feed it about four hours prior to baking.

